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 New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Miliband	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
	Belgium	Mr. Chastel
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Costa Rica	Mr. Weisleder
	Croatia	Mr. Jandroković
	France	Ms. Yade
	Indonesia	Mr. Cotan
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Lekota
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Letter dated 2 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/291)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Expression of sympathy to the Government and people of China in connection with the recent earthquake and to the Government and people of Myanmar in connection with cyclone Nargis

The President: At the outset of the meeting, I should like, on behalf of the entire Security Council, to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the Government and people of China in connection with the earthquake that occurred in Sichuan and resulted in immense devastation and heavy loss of life. I request the representative of China to convey to his Government and the families of the victims our sincere condolences for the tragedy that they have suffered. In a similar vein, I would like, on behalf of the Security Council, to extend our sympathy to Myanmar and its people following the devastation caused by cyclone Nargis.

May I invite all present in the Chamber to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of the victims of those disasters.

The members of the Council observed a minute of silence.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (spoke in Chinese): I wish to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, for extending sympathy and condolences to the Chinese Government and people on behalf of the Security Council, as well as for mourning the loss of Wenchuan earthquake victims. I will soon report to my Government and convey the Council's sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims. I am confident that, with the concerted efforts of the Chinese Government and people and the strong support of the members of the Security Council and other countries and international organizations, China will prevail in its earthquake relief efforts.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Letter dated 2 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/291)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of a large number of countries, namely, Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, El Salvador, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Liechtenstein, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand and Turkey, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. I am obviously delighted that there is such a large number of countries that want to contribute to this debate. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I request the Protocol Officer to escort His Excellency Mr. Nikola Špirić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Nikola Špirić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Nikola Špirić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On behalf of the Council, I also extend a warm welcome to Her Excellency Mrs. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the other aforementioned

countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Marwan Muasher, Senior Vice-President of the World Bank; to Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, who is well known to us; and to His Excellency Mr. Yukio Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Japan.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2008/291, which contains a letter from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

Our intention in calling for this debate is to put the international spotlight on what can be done to ensure that stabilization and recovery efforts are more effective, in particular in the period immediately following a ceasefire or peace agreement. There is a huge challenge before us, namely, to remove millions of people from the prolonged effects of conflict, to take away the fear that they will suffer the same horror again and to give them the hope of sustained peace, security and prosperity.

There are some admirable examples of the United Nations and the international community tackling conflict and saving lives, with bravery, intelligence, dedication and skill. But those examples are not the rule; in fact, sometimes they are the exception. We are not doing enough, and we are not doing well enough. Our concept paper offers our thoughts on the critical gaps that hamper international efforts and I look forward to hearing participants' perspectives in the course of this debate.

To start, it is important that we hear the testimony of people with direct experience of these challenges. I look forward to Foreign Minister Bangura's contribution. We also look forward to the contribution

of the Senior Vice President of the World Bank. And we look forward to the contribution of Mr. Brahimi, with his experience in Afghanistan, Iraq and other areas, as well as with his being the author of the landmark report on peacekeeping (S/2000/809).

But first, I would, of course, like to welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, at this meeting. He is on his way within the next hour and a half to Bangkok and then to Rangoon on very important business. We are very privileged to have him here. I know he has to leave immediately after his speech, but we are all very much looking forward to hearing what he has to say. I give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: It is an honour to join the Security Council this morning. I am grateful to the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom for bringing us together to discuss the critical question of how the international community can respond effectively in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

Over the past two decades, the United Nations has deepened its understanding of what it takes to prevent a relapse into conflict. We have learned how to better create space for national authorities to establish processes for sustainable peace, security and development. Lessons from many countries — the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Timor Leste, Haiti, Burundi and Liberia — all demonstrate that, while each context is different, there are three common and immediate priorities.

The first is to establish viable political processes to buttress peace agreements and to put in place legitimate national authorities. The second is to restore security and the rule of law, including early development of professional and accountable security services and justice systems. The third is to deliver immediate and tangible benefits to the affected population and create enabling conditions for longer-term development.

How, then, can we strengthen our collective response in the immediate aftermath of conflict and deliver on these critical priorities?

First, we must be coherent. While the primary responsibility for rebuilding after conflict undoubtedly belongs to national authorities, the United Nations has a major obligation. My Special Representatives are responsible for coordinating the response of all United

Nations actors in the field. We have put in place structures, planning and monitoring processes to support this effort in the immediate term and throughout the transition to longer-term peacebuilding.

But the United Nations is only one of several actors in the field. Regional organizations, Member States and international financial institutions contribute critical elements of a collective international response. Where we work together, as in Liberia or in Sierra Leone, we deliver a vastly more effective response. Coordination and clarity of leadership are critical to ensuring that each partner brings its distinctive strength to the broad collective effort.

Secondly, we need sufficient capacity. If the United Nations is to lead on the ground, my Special Representatives need to be empowered to do so. They need the means to identify strategic priorities, elaborate plans and mobilize funds with others, in particular development partners. By aligning, if not integrating, our respective instruments, such as reports to the Security Council, donor pledging conferences and relief frameworks, we can ensure that priorities are pursued consistently. We should also consider joint assessments and strengthened reporting to the Security Council on critical recovery needs, drawing on expertise from the whole United Nations family as well as from international financial institutions.

Thirdly, we need to build up civilian expertise. The small but agile United Nations standing police capacity is an important step in the right direction, as is the recent launch of the standby team of mediation experts. The creation of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations reflects my commitment to a team approach to upholding the rule of law, security sector reform and respect for human rights.

But we remain desperately short of judges, prison wardens, state administrators and managers, particularly those with knowledge and experience of the countries and systems in which we operate. Not only should they be well equipped when they are deployed; they need start-up funding at their disposal. Many Member States and regional partners, including the European Union, are exploring ways of building deployable capacities in this critical area. We need to broaden and pool our efforts to deliver global resources for peace.

This need for civilian expertise also extends to recovery and development. We need to do much better in delivering early peace dividends. That means scaling up relief and development capacities to enable national authorities to pay their civil servants, restore agricultural life and initiate employment programmes. It may be time to draw on the experience of the humanitarian community in launching urgent recovery in a rapid and predictable way, including through greater use of local resources and capacities.

Ultimately, all of this requires early and flexible funding. Early investment does indeed entail risk. But the cost of failure and the potential for rewards are much higher. Bold and innovative steps are required to meet critical priority needs. To facilitate rapid delivery in the earliest phase, let us explore approaches such as a common start-up fund.

The immediate aftermath of conflict is the crossroads at which peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding meet. We need to ensure that the road taken is the one that leads us most rapidly and effectively to our goal of a nationally owned, sustainable peace, with strengthened national capacities. Many of these issues have been identified by the Peacebuilding Commission, which has a key role to play in supporting national actors in achieving their long-term objectives for sustainable peace and development.

Today's debate is, I hope, the start of a collective effort to reach that objective.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement. I am sure that the whole Council wishes him safety and success in his extremely important mission in Myanmar. We wish him good luck and thank him for his contribution this morning.

I am now very happy to invite the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone, Her Excellency Mrs. Zainab Hawa Bangura, to take the floor.

Mrs. Bangura (Sierra Leone): First and foremost, let me on behalf of the Government and the people of Sierra Leone join you, Mr. President, and the Security Council, in extending our heartfelt condolences to the People's Republic of China and Myanmar on their loss.

On behalf of President Ernest Bai Koroma and the people of Sierra Leone, I warmly congratulate you,

Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May and to register my sincere gratitude to you for having invited me to participate in this important debate. We assure you and the other members of the Council of our fullest and unwavering support.

We deeply appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the discussion on this vital subject. The choice and timeliness of the theme is an indication of the significance that the Government of the United Kingdom attaches to the search for lasting peace and stability in post-conflict societies.

We in Sierra Leone are of the view that better funding and improved integration of international leadership are crucial components of post-conflict stabilization and national recovery. In this regard, the role of the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, which has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, cannot be overemphasized. Nonetheless, practitioners have raised questions about the tardiness of the involvement of the critical mass of the international community in responding to crises or early warning signals in order to contain a looming, explosive situation in certain spots. Consequently, observers have tended to interpret such delays in response as a function of the strategic significance that those spots represent within the international community. For instance, notwithstanding the destruction, carnage and mass displacement of hapless civilians throughout the Mano River Union basin, it took the United Nations a long time to endorse the timely and crucial intervention of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) peacekeeping force in the crisis that engulfed the neighbouring States of Sierra Leone and Liberia.

In all frankness, the rapidity with which the international community responded to crises in places such as Kuwait, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq, as opposed to many African crises, showed analysts the need to rethink the international community's approach to resolving conflicts around the globe. We are hopeful that the Peacebuilding Commission will not lend itself to such inadvertence or anomalies in supporting countries engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding.

Delivering sustainable peace is not only an act of enlightened self-interest, but also a public good for all of mankind and humanity. Experience has proven that conflict and social instability breed poverty, flagrant

violations of human rights and human dignity, socioeconomic disparity and social and political disintegration. The causes of conflict are much like their effects: poverty, low economic growth, ethnic and cultural intolerance, and the mugging of democracy, social justice and human dignity. Wrestling with this vicious cycle of instability and underdevelopment in our present global reality is, therefore, clearly not an act of charity.

In Sierra Leone, as in many other places that have been afflicted with a protracted, violent and devastating conflict, the road to peace has not been altogether smooth. But with tolerance, understanding and the overriding need to reconcile and move forward for the general good, even the pain, the mud and the thorns we have travelled through for peace have been our greatest healers. Today, we can reflect with pride on the recent presidential and parliamentary elections that witnessed a seamless transition from the former ruling party to the opposition. We have made a significant leap in our peace and democratization processes and laid a solid foundation for sustainable peace. The 2007 elections, in particular, speak eloquently of our political maturity and determination to achieve lasting stability. For this, we are thankful to the United Nations and all of our multilateral and bilateral partners for their support.

Despite the gains in implementing the Lomé Peace Accord and the successful conclusion of the disarmament, demobilization and re-integration (DDR) programme, we are still in the process of surmounting the hurdles inherent in constructing effective and legitimate governmental institutions to consolidate the peace and foster human development. Crises, whether man-made or natural, generally lead to a breakdown of State institutions. Reforming those institutions is undoubtedly a complex and demanding task. Our experience in addressing the practical challenges in establishing transitional governance structures, providing security, delivering public services and addressing questions of transitional justice speaks eloquently to our ability to overcome those hurdles.

The journey along the thorny path of advancing national reconciliation and central Government control over the entire country, including our post-conflict governance and institutional capacity-building programmes, would not have been possible without engagement with our multilateral and bilateral partners and national and international non-governmental

organizations. The role of partners, such as the United Nations and its specialized agencies, the African Union (AU), the European Commission, the Commonwealth, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and our many bilateral partners — notably the bold leadership, logistical and financial resources provided by the United Kingdom, Nigeria and others, has been crucial in nurturing the condition for lasting peace and reconciliation in Sierra Leone. Some of the feasible outcomes that have emerged from those collaborations included the successful implementation of programmes such as the DDR, the reform of the justice and security sectors and the capacity-building and development of the governance and transitional justice mechanisms.

The learning curve in Sierra Leone's post-conflict stabilization has, no doubt, contributed immeasurably to the knowledge base in United Nations peacekeeping operations. There is no denying that, without the requisite levels of funding, leadership and human capital, post-conflict societies cannot easily escape from a relapse into renewed violence. In the face of extensive devastation of infrastructures and the mass exodus of skilled human resource capacities in disaster or conflict-prone societies, those countries could only reverse the trend to pre-crisis levels with coherent, sustained and coordinated partnerships with the international community.

In our view, the Government of the United Kingdom is not advancing an entirely new phenomenon, but rather giving context to the value that the now defunct programmes, such as the Volunteer Service Overseas, Canadian University Students Overseas and the Peace Corps among others, added to capacity-building and development in beneficiary host countries. This, for us, is a wake-up call for the international community to step up efforts to promote post-conflict stabilization. We do not always need to wait for situations to deteriorate before flying tens of thousands of blue helmets and green berets to extinguish volcanoes. Investing in peace and stability makes our work easier and saves lives and billions of dollars.

The foundation for the enhancement of State capacities for war-to-peace transitions for development lies primarily in coherent and sustained partnerships and cooperation among the various actors in peacebuilding. The Peacebuilding Commission was established in tandem with this notion in 2005 in order

to sustain international attention on countries emerging from conflict and to assist in addressing critical gaps in their recovery process. Similarly, despite inherent challenges in funding, regional and subregional organizations, such as the AU and ECOWAS, have also established peacebuilding support mechanisms aimed at complementing external intervention in order to bring their comparative advantage on knowledge of the local realities to bear on peacebuilding work. Being a pioneer on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, Sierra Leone welcomes the United Kingdom's recent announcement to set-up a pool of rapidly deployable and skilled civilian personnel in this regard.

Underpinning all these initiatives and engagements is the need for coordination among the plethora of international actors involved in post-conflict operations. This brings the centrality of the leadership role of the United Nations into focus, particularly at the field level, to effectively manage the rhythm of war-to-peace transition, in a balanced and coordinated manner, fully nurturing the capacities of local actors to take on their responsibilities. In Sierra Leone, that leadership was found in the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) under the directive of the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General following the phasing out of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone. Thus, a robust and strengthened representation of the Secretary-General in post-conflict situations is crucial for the success of their operations and the long-term stabilization and sustainable development of those societies.

As a demonstration of our faith in this debate as a wake-up call for the international community to step up the efforts that are essential for promoting post-conflict stabilization, let me make the following observations for further reflection.

First, as in every partnership and cooperation, external intervention to promote and strengthen war-to-peace stabilization processes is not entirely devoid of tensions and dilemmas. Even with the best of intentions, international involvement in providing security, designing transitional governance structures, economic reforms and the delivery of public services and identifying local interlocutors, among others, often comes under the scrutiny of undermining the cardinal principle of national ownership and long-term sustainability.

Secondly, another potential area of tensions lies in the size, scope and assertiveness of external players in the discharge of their mandate and tasks, especially where reform measures conflict with traditional norms and sensitivities in those early stages of conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

Thirdly, while external engagement of a sustained and effective kind remains highly desirable, adequate attention should also be paid to the need for local actors to be given ample space to determine policy options and decision-making in the pursuit of their goals and objectives.

In conclusion, it is our view that in the light of the capacity gap occasioned by the massive flight of badly needed skilled human resources in the wake of crisis situations, the civilian components of peacekeeping operation personnel are as significantly essential as their military counterparts. In fact, the situation becomes even more demanding in the peacebuilding phase so as to allow societies emerging from conflict to build and develop the capacities of their local actors to assume their role in lubricating the recovery process. It is therefore appropriate to call on the Peacebuilding Commission and multilateral and bilateral partners, including regional organizations, to assist in providing the requisite financial, logistical and technical support for the creation and empowerment of such a pool of civilian peace corps at both the international and the local levels and a base that is readily deployable as a military component and under effective leadership and coordination.

The President: I thank the Minister for that very interesting contribution. I look forward to the debate taking forward some of the questions that she has raised and the lessons that she has tried to teach us from the Sierra Leone experience.

I am now very happy to welcome the Senior Vice-President of the World Bank, Mr. Marwan Muasher, who is going to share his views with us.

Mr. Muasher (World Bank): The President of the World Bank, Mr. Robert Zoellick, is unable to be with us today and asked me to transmit his greetings and appreciation to you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate and for inviting the World Bank.

I welcome the statement of the Secretary-General and wish to assure him of our commitment to work

jointly with the United Nations system to meet together the challenges of post-conflict countries.

Over the past 15 years, the World Bank has considerably expanded its work on conflict and fragility, both operationally and analytically. With the broad support of our Board of Directors, the Bank focuses more on peacebuilding, State building, institutional reforms and partnerships. While our knowledge base for countries in post-conflict or on a gradual reform track is good, we still need to know more about how to achieve results in terms of conflict prevention and poverty reduction in countries facing deteriorating governance or a political impasse. Our partnership with the United Nations system will prove essential in order to refine our operational approach.

The Bank recently approved a new state-building and peacebuilding fund to address the needs of state and local governance and peacebuilding in fragile situations that offers the promise of high impact. It aims to complement the Peacebuilding Fund of the Peacebuilding Commission of the United Nations and other efforts.

On the analytical side, the Bank has commissioned applied research in areas such as conflict and development and natural resources and conflict, in collaboration with renowned research institutions. I am emphasizing here the importance of the contribution of research to our policy at the Bank and to the international discourse at large.

Overcoming the multifaceted problems of countries coming out of conflict or seeking to avoid the breakdown of the State is crucial to the Bank's development mission, its sustainability and effectiveness. As more countries graduate from the International Development Association, our concessional finance window, we expect an increasing share of our partner countries to be fragile and conflict-affected countries. The objectives and expected results we aim to achieve under that strategic theme fall into three broad areas.

First, we aim at promoting better global understanding. The World Bank aims to promote better global understanding of the dynamics that affect fragile situations and effective strategic and operational approaches to assisting them. An important starting point is to increase the consensus on international frameworks and priorities to approaches in those

countries, including diplomatic, development, institution-building and security linkages.

Secondly, we aim at promoting improved country-level collaboration. On the country level, our goals include practical examples of successful international support to peacebuilding transitions, consolidation of governance reform, progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and private sector development, particularly with our private sector window, the International Finance Corporation.

Thirdly, we aim at delivering visible results through a coherent World Bank Group approach. Our goal is for a World Bank Group that is able to intervene quickly and effectively, drawing on an expanded field presence, while exercising flexibility in internal operating procedures and close work with external partners.

Against that background, I will now turn to the concept note prepared for this debate. I commend the United Kingdom for its succinctness.

With regard to leadership on the ground, we believe that the leadership of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General is critical and we look to their guidance, particularly in diplomatic and security areas. To that end, a Special Representative of the Secretary-General must enjoy the full support of the international community.

We strongly believe in supporting a country's institutions and systems as the best way to secure national ownership and render reconstruction sustainable. Concurrently, measures for accountability to citizens and for empowering all citizens need to be included.

Furthermore, we need to strengthen our measurement of results in fragile and post-conflict situations and scale up what works. To implement coordination, we view a government's multi-year budget as the preferred starting point. We acknowledge, however, that in the immediate post-conflict phase, capacities and instruments often do not exist. It may, thus, be necessary to put in place an alternative and temporary mechanism to deliver services and assistance.

The international community must also deliver a coherent message to post-conflict governments, based on a shared platform for post-conflict recovery planning and joint monitoring. For example, in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo, a broad-based effort by the European Commission, United Nations agencies, the International Monetary Fund, the African Development Bank and the World Bank as well as main donor countries, including Belgium, France, the United Kingdom and the United States, was able to harmonize donor views for discussion with the new Government on government priorities for reforms.

The Peacebuilding Commission recently undertook a mission to Guinea-Bissau, in which the Bank participated. That mission assessed the current situation in the country and resulted in the establishment by the Government of a national steering committee that will elaborate a peacebuilding strategy and prioritize programmes for funding.

On civilian capacity, the Bank has just established a callable roster for rapid deployment and we will seek to link our callable capacity to that of our partners with a view to jointly mobilizing our rosters in crisis situations.

With regard to more rapid and flexible funding, when properly designed, large-scale post-conflict multi-donor trust funds can play a critical role during the reconstruction process, as we have seen with the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund and the Trust Fund for Timor-Leste, for instance. For the Bank-administered multi-donor trust fund for South Sudan, I am pleased that progress has been made and that, at the recent conference in Oslo, both the Government of South Sudan and donors confirmed that they saw the trust fund as an effective instrument, with donors making substantial new pledges to it.

However, we will have to deal with the tension emanating, for example, from the trade-off between ensuring fiduciary standards and showing quick results. That tension could hamper implementation. In that regard, we believe that the fiduciary principles accord that is currently being prepared by the United Nations Development Group and the Bank will significantly improve the administration of such trust funds and deliver results to the beneficiary population more rapidly.

In order to be strategic, large-scale post-conflict trust funds should be built upon post-conflict needs assessments, transitional results matrices and sector analysis. They do not always cater to the needs of the start-up phase, such as initial facilities needed by a new government, human vulnerability and emergency

employment creation. A number of other funds, for instance the Peacebuilding Fund, can cover that phase without the need for a separate assessment. In that regard, we deem it important to move towards making the humanitarian and development appropriations more fungible in order to ensure a swift and appropriate international response to possibly rapidly changing needs on the ground.

We need to and we can leverage our cumulative experience better in order to make tangible progress on the ground. We are willing to work with our partners in the United Nations system and the international community to that end.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi.

Mr. Brahimi: I thank you very much, Sir, for inviting me to take part in today's debate.

Your concept paper for today's debate sets the problem very accurately and very clearly. When a peace agreement has been signed and a United Nations peacekeeping operation moves in, there are certain critical needs that must be swiftly addressed if we are to have a real chance of building a sustainable peace, and yet we continue to face many of the same challenges that existed a decade ago and more.

In the limited time available to me, I shall address only two issues: funding and civilian capacity. I shall do so briefly and draw exclusively on my past personal experience.

Looking back to Afghanistan in December 2001, the political challenges were great, but we had one important factor working in our favour — there was enormous international attention focused on the country and a strong commitment to making the peace process succeed. That, we knew, would bring us a lot of good will and political support. Most important, we also expected it to provide us with some cash. As I told the many observers present with us at the Bonn peace talks, we needed to arrive in Kabul with money in a bag — to take it with us — because we had to begin providing some peace dividends soon after our arrival.

However, while we had plenty of ideas, we had very little money to pay for them, and I must confess that what little cash we did have we did not always use wisely. For example, we needed to get the ministries up and running. So what did we do? We bought, for each minister, one car, one desk, one chair and one

computer. That served only to embarrass the minister in front of his officials because, in his department, there were no desks and no chairs, windows were broken and there was no electricity and no heating. We next embarrassed ourselves when we invited Afghan ministers and other officials to the inauguration of the beautifully refurbished offices of one of our agencies. While Government offices still had no electricity, no heating and no water, that particular building of ours had been redone fast and to the highest international standards. Its transformation did not go unnoticed by the Afghan population.

In Afghanistan and elsewhere, United Nations officials are often asked how much of the funds donated to help these countries is actually spent by the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations on themselves and why. They do not understand why the funds pledged to them actually go into two very separate pots — one pot that was intended for the host country and a separate pot that would pay for refurbishing United Nations buildings, purchasing fleets of big white vehicles, and bringing lots of highly paid international staff.

As if to add insult to injury, while the pot that pays for refurbishing our own offices, running our generators and paying our own personnel fills up rather quickly, the other pot does not. In Afghanistan, while hundreds of millions were contributed to United Nations agencies in the early days, very little was available directly to the ministries and other national institutions. Besides, I am sure that everyone must have seen the recent Oxfam study that said that a staggering 40 per cent of the funds donated go back to donor countries in the form of salaries for expatriates and the like.

Thus, we had to resort to creative measures to establish a mechanism within the Government, with support from donors and the United Nations Development Programme, to ensure that the very modest salaries of all civil servants were paid. That was a real exploit that had to be repeated every month. Rebuilding roads, hospitals and schools had to wait. It needed even more ingenuity and the patient support of many dedicated and able ambassadors, including one now present in this Chamber, United States Ambassador Khalilzad.

Peacebuilding does not occur just by sending United Nations staff to a country and putting our flags

in the ground. Funds are needed. The most complex operations, from Haiti to the Sudan, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Afghanistan, have peacebuilding activities at the very core of their mandates, ranging from police reform and the strengthening of judicial institutions to elections and the refurbishment of prisons, yet they have no allocations in their budgets for those activities. That creates a huge gap at a time when the greatest risk exists of relapse into conflict.

United Nations trust funds have been established in a few missions to make funding available from voluntary contributions. However, 13 per cent of the contributions have to be paid to the United Nations for what are called programme support costs. Nobody has been able to explain to me why such a staggering tax is imposed on those trust funds. It is, fortunately, possible to negotiate a substantial reduction of that tax, but it takes months to bring such negotiations to a fruitful end. It is no wonder that many donors balk at contributing to those trust funds. In addition, missions complain about the cumbersome procedures for accessing funds. As a result, after all these years and struggles, we are still unable to use the trust funds effectively.

I now come to the issue of civilian capacity. You will recall, Sir, that we tried to approach our mandate in Afghanistan with what we called a light footprint. That concept is really very simple. We should have as many international staff as we need to get the job done, but not one single staff member more than that. Our goal in the mission, individually and collectively, should be from the outset to work ourselves out of a job. We should not suddenly realize, as our mandate is coming to a close, that we have overlooked the need to build national capacity. That is one area in which I believe we continue to do rather poorly.

First, we assume that each country we enter has little or no capacity of its own. Perhaps that is because we do not look hard enough. In Afghanistan, which had been ravaged by 23 years of war, we met countless Afghans with skills that the United Nations could have used. If we had made it a priority at the outset of the mission to recruit Afghans, we could have hired many of them to serve in all parts of the Administration, in Kabul as well as in the provinces, and a very large number of positions within the United Nations mission and agencies might have been filled by locals. Even if we could not find the expertise we needed in the

country, there was an Afghan diaspora — at least 5 million-strong — most of which was across the border in Pakistan and Iran.

The second issue is the size of our missions and the fact that we are never able to recruit our authorized staff in a timely manner. We then attribute many of the mission's failures to the shortfall in staff. Some suggestions have been put on the table, such as having national Governments assist with developing civilian cadres and rosters of rapidly deployable civilians. Those are worthwhile suggestions and they must be explored. I personally believe that the real need is in the field of the rule of law and my favourite option would be for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations itself to be enabled to establish its own roster of retired policemen, judges and so on. I know for a fact that in many countries large and small, in the North and in the South alike, such capacity does exist and awaits to be mobilized, but perhaps those difficulties in identifying experts, along with the lack of programmatic funds for peacekeeping operations, offer a good opportunity to the Council to re-examine its own approach to peacekeeping mandates.

I have the impression that one of the key recommendations contained in the 2000 report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (S/2000/809) is not always fully taken into consideration when peacekeeping mandates are discussed. That is the recommendation that the Council should give the United Nations achievable mandates and ensure that the mission is provided with all the resources — staff, funds and equipment — that are necessary to do the job. We must also ask whether the United Nations, given its conditions of service, will ever attract qualified staff in sufficient numbers. And we must ask whether we will continue to have difficulty persuading qualified individuals, especially women, to work in non-family duty stations.

Perhaps more important, we must avoid putting together "template" missions that set out complex and ambitious tasks for imagined armies of expert civilians who are to carry out the same laundry list of tasks in dramatically different post-conflict settings. It would pay out handsomely for us to take the time to look at the capacity that exists in-country and to see how the United Nations could partner with domestic institutions, rather than setting up our own heavy and costly structures.

To state the obvious once again, mandates must be based on the actual — not the perceived — needs of any given country. We cannot fully understand those needs until we have been present for a while, engaged in a dialogue with leaders and civil society, and until we have, together with them, formed a clear understanding of what is really needed. I believe that such an approach would move us towards much smaller, more focused missions.

At the same time, leaders of peacekeeping missions should not forget that other United Nations entities have preceded them in the country where they themselves have just arrived; those entities may even have been working there for years and years, perhaps decades. The new mission must endeavour to complement — not duplicate or replace — the work of the United Nations agencies already there. Allow me to insist on the importance of the light-footprint approach and on the necessity of systematically exploring the possibility of using local capacity as early and as extensively as possible. Others are doing this; why not the United Nations?

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan is a non-governmental organization that has been active in Afghanistan since the early 1980s. It is funded by the Government and the people of Sweden, and it now employs 8,000 Afghans, including doctors, teachers and engineers. Yet it does not count more than 15 internationals among its staff. The United Nations itself runs very important and successful demining activities, with 7,000 to 8,000 Afghans and only around 20 internationals.

I often say that, if I could return to Afghanistan in the year 2001, one of the things I would do differently would be to place priority on strengthening the rule of law. What do I mean by that? Do I mean that we should have had more foreign experts focusing on rule-of-law issues, drafting laws and training judges? No; what we needed was better and more effective use of our political leverage on that issue. We should have played a stronger and a more proactive political facilitation role in uniting the various national actors behind a common vision and a national plan for strengthening the rule of law in the country.

In that connection, I am pleased to see that the Secretary-General has just issued a new guidance note on a common United Nations approach to the rule of law, which highlights that the role of the United

Nations is to facilitate the processes through which various national stakeholders debate and outline the elements of their countries' plans to strengthen the rule of law and secure sustainable justice, and that the aim of United Nations rule-of-law assistance is to help those national stakeholders to develop their own visions, agendas and approaches to reform and programmes.

Process, leadership and decision-making must be put in the hands of national stakeholders as early as possible. The Secretary-General correctly states that rule-of-law assistance has often overemphasized technical dimensions and paid less attention to political and strategic considerations and that, until national stakeholders see the utility of supporting rule-of-law development, technical assistance will have little impact.

The Council does not need to be reminded of the importance of the role that the United Nations plays in helping countries to manage and resolve their conflicts and to rebuild their national institutions and economies. Precious experience has been gained over the years, and United Nations missions perform better today than they did a few years ago. But we must not be complacent. Quite a few missions are struggling to find the right balance between the goals set for them and the resources that they have been able to obtain. In particular, funding and civilian capacity are two of the important gaps that need to be addressed most urgently. The manner in which the Council discusses and decides on peacekeeping mandates may contribute significantly to the solution of these problems.

The international community spends billions every year on peacekeeping. It is clearly not good enough that, in some cases, we have entered host countries to the sound of the population's cheers, only to bow our heads in disbelief and embarrassment in the face of that same population's disappointment, anger and even hostility a few months later because we have been unable to deliver tangible peace dividends. However, this is not inevitable; we can and should do much better.

The President: I very much thank Mr. Brahimi for having drawn on his experience so frankly to challenge the Council to take seriously its words about national ownership and local solutions.

Speakers have referred to the succinctness and shortness of the United Kingdom's concept paper, and

it falls to me to ask that speakers be equally short and succinct in their contributions to this debate. In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I must remind speakers that their contributions to the debate should be no longer than five minutes. Delegations with longer statements are kindly requested to distribute the texts in writing and to limit their spoken remarks to five minutes only. We have 20 speakers to hear before lunch and an additional 35 speakers after lunch, so we need to make progress.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Gordan Jandroković, Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Croatia, who has just arrived from his country, to take the floor.

Mr. Jandroković (Croatia): At the outset, I wish to express Croatia's deepest condolences to China and Myanmar on their tragic losses.

My country has aligned itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Republic of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union. Nevertheless, I would like to make several remarks on today's important topic.

First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for choosing the topic of post-conflict peacebuilding for the thematic debate under the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council. That topic is timely and, above all, exceedingly relevant in today's world — a world in which we are witnesses to situations where far too many conflicts that end through negotiated settlements restart within five years. Moreover, we are witnesses to many conflict areas in which the situation does not permit national Governments to assume their responsibility to ensure the security and well-being of their people, and therefore unnecessarily prolongs a sometimes seemingly endless international military or other presence.

Why is that so? The answer, when found, will almost inevitably be very complex, if not at times almost elusive — not unlike the actual situations in post-conflict areas themselves. Some of the possible reasons for this can be found in the concept paper for today's deliberations (S/2008/291, annex), which, in our view, provides a good starting point for our discussion. To be sure, the rapid implementation of a peace agreement is very important, but we have to ensure that this does not occur in a vacuum. The whole of a society that emerges from conflict has to feel the

peace dividends of emergence from a conflict, which take the form of stability, security and improvements in daily life. We agree completely with those assessments.

Additionally, we believe that it is important to involve domestic resources, wherever possible and without exacerbating existing political tensions. An operation of post-conflict stabilization can most certainly benefit from this kind of engagement. The utilization of domestic resources certainly enhances the effectiveness of an operation and makes use of the available experience and skills of the people in the country emerging from conflict, who more often than not can provide a unique perspective not otherwise available to outsiders.

Another added value of this approach is being able to develop autonomous capacity that is necessary for the consolidation of those national structures that will eventually need to take over responsibility for governing the country. Also worth mentioning is the positive effect that the international community working together with national structures can have on the overall better acceptance of a peacebuilding mission by the local population.

Our own experience during the war imposed on Croatia in the 1990s, when United Nations peacekeepers, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Health Organization, as well as many other agencies and humanitarian assistance organizations, were present in the area, leads us to conclude that all these agencies may have come with the best of intentions, but that in many cases they were not able to understand the real needs of the population or to cooperate effectively with each other or with the people involved. The ultimate result of this was that much of the overall spending of the United Nations and other agencies in Croatia during that time went into maintaining themselves and their own programmes and goals, and did not end up with the people or institutions that required their assistance.

It is, of course, not my intention to disparage the presence of United Nations and other humanitarian organizations in Croatia during those difficult times. We are most certainly very grateful for the help and assistance we received, and indeed some significant results were produced, including one of the most successful United Nations missions overall — the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern

Slavonia. My comments are aimed solely at providing examples of how we can always learn from and improve our activities.

The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission is one of the most important results of United Nations reform thus far. Croatia was very active in its founding, and was also elected as a member in its inaugural year of existence, including as a member of the country-specific meeting on Burundi. We value and support the work of the Commission, especially through its integrated peacebuilding strategies. What we need to do now is ensure that those strategies are implemented on the ground in the most efficient manner.

Croatia is of the opinion that the peacebuilding concept enacted through the Peacebuilding Commission offers the best way in which we can effectively achieve as well as consolidate the three main pillars of the United Nations: security, development and the protection of human rights. Achieving and consolidating security creates the conditions necessary for development and therefore also strengthens the tools required for protecting and enhancing human rights. Implementing the three main pillars together leads to creating sustainable peace and long-lasting stability and prosperity.

We are aware that the chances for substantive peace are enhanced with the speedy and coordinated engagement of the United Nations system following the establishment of a ceasefire on the ground or the signing of a peace agreement. As there are many United Nations agencies that can be involved in post-conflict situations, it is imperative that their efforts be coordinated and integrated so that the capabilities of all these United Nations and other agencies can be utilized to capacity while simultaneously reducing overlap. In doing so, costs can most certainly be reduced and more resources can be allocated to address the core needs of the country involved.

A good example of utilizing a coordinated and integrated approach is the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence, entitled "Delivering as one" (see A/61/583), which we fully support. That report envisages the role of an empowered Resident Coordinator as the leader of integrated United Nations efforts in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment. Post-conflict peacebuilding efforts and

leadership on the ground should follow a similar pattern.

We also believe that the plans and organization of the core structure of integrated post-conflict stabilization efforts should be permanently placed on standby so that preparations for a specific operation will take the minimum amount of time and will include only country-specific details. Several questions in this regard have been posed in the concept paper for today's discussion (S/2008/291, annex). When looking at the different types of civilian experts that are required for a post-conflict peacebuilding mission, especially in the areas of justice, corrections, security sector reform, governance and economic recovery, we believe that the formation of rosters, as was suggested in the Brahimi report on peacekeeping (S/2000/809), is a good way forward. The existence of permanent rosters of civilian experts that are ready to be deployed on short notice would significantly shorten preparation periods and enable the civilian effort in post-conflict stabilization to be deployed immediately after a ceasefire or peace agreement has been reached. In that respect, my Government is ready to make its contribution in the form of civilian experts who themselves have gained experience and expertise during the post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction period in Croatia.

All the activities that we are talking about today are obviously not possible without sufficient funding. Therefore, we must do our utmost to ensure sustainable and transparent financing. For its part, Croatia is one of the founders of the Peacebuilding Fund, whose work it supports and contributes to.

My delegation hopes that today's discussion will result in the establishment of concrete steps towards strengthening both United Nations and international capabilities in the field of post-conflict peacebuilding. We are looking forward to the Secretary-General's advice on this matter, and are of the opinion that the Council should revisit this issue in a timely manner.

The President: I am now delighted to give the floor to His Excellency Mosiuoa Gerard Patrick Lekota, Minister of Defence of South Africa.

Mr. Lekota (South Africa): Allow me to begin by thanking the delegation of the United Kingdom for organizing today's debate. South Africa aligns itself with the statement to be made later by the

representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

In December 2005, the General Assembly and the Security Council concurrently established the Peacebuilding Commission as a new intergovernmental advisory body of the United Nations to support peace efforts in countries emerging from conflict.

Today's debate should be seen as another opportunity to support and enhance existing mechanism of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, thus re-energizing peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict countries. It is important that the Peacebuilding Commission be strengthened and remain the focal point of peacebuilding activities. Right now, the main challenge facing the Commission is to maximize its impact on the ground in full alignment, cooperation and accord with national Governments' policies and strategies.

The priorities in the post-conflict environment should centre around the four basic pillars of post-conflict reconstruction, namely, security, social and economic well-being, justice and reconciliation, good governance and participation. Post-conflict societies are confronted with various problems, including the absence of, or weak, institutions, and limited or no capacity necessary for the long-term sustainability of peace and socio-economic development.

Even more important is ensuring national and local ownership in the identification, development and recommendation of national priorities and strategies. Without national ownership of peacebuilding, any intervention will likely be regarded as an imposition. And, as history has taught us, imposed solutions are soon disregarded by their very beneficiaries and are bound to fail dismally.

The issue of deploying civilian experts with a view to addressing these capacity gaps in a country's post-conflict and stabilization periods is worth scrutinizing closely. South Africa's experience in African peace missions, such as in Burundi, show that some of the civilian expertise is invaluable. In principle, we therefore support the concept of integrated peace missions, within the confines of various mandates. We hope there will be ongoing and detailed discussions on how this concept could be applied, including on the role of the United Nations, regional organizations and member States.

Our limited experience since we joined in the efforts of the international community in seeking to stabilize parts of the continent and other places indicates to us that regional buy-in is critical for the success of any peace mission. We realize now from what we have experienced that merged or balanced participation by countries of the region in which the conflict is taking place is vital, because those countries have partial but direct interest in the success or otherwise of the peace mission. It is no exaggeration to say that sometimes human commitment to a process could indeed be more important than billions of dollars being thrown at a problem. Human beings can make things happen even, at times, without money.

It is our view that for post-conflict reconstruction to succeed its processes should be seen as reinforcing the attainment of peace, stability and security. In effect, both national and regional participation must be part of the effort right from the beginning, so that those in the country and in the region feel that they own the entire process. Sustainability beyond settlement requires the will power of the country and of the countries surrounding it.

On a practical level, this would mean that post-conflict reconstruction practitioners and resources are deployed alongside peacekeepers. However, we are cognizant of the challenges associated with the deployment of civilian capacities, including issues of security.

Among other challenges the United Kingdom delegation raised in its concept paper is the financing gap in the aftermath of conflict. One of the pillars of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture is the Peacebuilding Fund. The Fund was created for the specific purpose of assisting in the facilitation of peacebuilding activities and is understood to be a catalyst for attracting much-needed financial resource injections, particularly at a time when there may be little hope of success towards recovery. The role of the Fund is critical, because for peace to have a chance, the material conditions of a society must change and people's hopes for a better life must be sustained. Quick-impact projects must be implemented so as to demonstrate peace dividends to fragile populations and communities.

The resources of the United Nations and other multinational organizations often move much slower than required, as a consequence of which golden

opportunities for success are sometimes missed. We have found ourselves compelled at times to approach some partners to ask them for direct bilateral assistance so that we do not lose opportunities that are there. In that regard, I must mention the Netherlands, Belgium and the United Kingdom, which have sometimes assisted and have made it possible for us to sustain the processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The African Union continues to play its role in the peacebuilding field, including through its post-conflict reconstruction and development policy. South Africa is privileged to have been selected to chair the first African Union ministerial committee focusing on post-conflict reconstruction and development in the Sudan.

In conclusion, we appreciate the efforts of the United Kingdom presidency to lead us on these cross-cutting issues of peace, security and development, and we support the draft presidential statement to be adopted later.

The President: I thank the representative of South Africa for his very focused and helpful contribution.

I am now happy to invite His Excellency Mr. Olivier Chastel, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, to take the floor.

Mr. Chastel (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I too wish to extend heartfelt condolences to China and Myanmar.

I thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. Belgium associates itself with the statement to be made by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union.

The concept paper before us (S/2008/291, annex) poses some fundamental questions, such as how to ensure sustainable post-conflict stability and how to avoid a relapse into conflict following a peace agreement. The international community is still struggling to meet those challenges. Clearly, it is not for the Security Council alone to find the answers to these questions. The General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission and other United Nations bodies can also enrich this process of reflection.

My statement will focus on the following areas: the contribution of international civilian experts; the

provision of flexible financial resources; partnerships between beneficiary States and the international community; and coordination within the international community.

The evolution of peacekeeping operations in recent years has been an initial response to these concerns. For some time, they have been more than just military operations; they have become multidisciplinary, and they contribute to the protection of human rights, to transitional justice, to training police and security forces, and to State capacity-building. Yet we must note that it remains difficult, following a peace agreement, speedily to dispatch adequate numbers of civilian experts who specialize in these spheres to the area in question. But that is the very kind of technical assistance that can make the difference in sustainable peacebuilding, by helping the country to rebuild its State structures.

Many countries are not in a position to dispatch civilian experts in a rapid and flexible manner, either because of administrative obstacles or because, quite simply, such experts are unavailable. We might consider, for example, establishing a pool of international experts for immediate deployment. That could, moreover, be done in cooperation with regional organizations. Belgium would favour the Secretary-General studying this question and making recommendations.

Last week's Security Council debate (see S/PV.5889) highlighted the importance of security sector reform for lasting peace, and I shall therefore not dwell on that key element.

Another major problem is the lack of financing instruments that would make it possible to respond flexibly enough to emergencies and to the most urgent needs in a post-conflict situation — or at least the lack of sufficient coherence among existing ones. The Brahimi report (S/2000/809) had already recommended that a certain percentage of peacekeeping mission funds should be applied to quick-impact projects. The goal here is for the population to immediately enjoy the benefits of peace. Quick-impact projects add real value, and we should consider the possibility of rapidly mobilizing financial resources to help national authorities carry out such projects. In that context, we should look at financial resources and instruments that can be mobilized as speedily as possible to benefit a post-conflict country, and should consider how to

operationalize them in a coordinated way. Such thinking is also under way in the Peacebuilding Commission.

The provision of civilian experts and flexible financial assistance are necessary elements during the phase of stabilization. But they are not enough. The political commitment of the country's leaders must also be reflected in effective operational cooperation with the international community. In that context, we must bear in mind the realities and obstacles in the field. Often, national authorities are unable to meet the many challenges of a crisis — not for any lack of political will but rather because of a lack of capacity and resources. For that reason, we should consider partnerships with such authorities in order to speedily identify needs and properly respond to them together.

Better cooperation within the international community is also needed, along with earlier planning for possible intervention on the ground. From the very outset, the Security Council should better integrate the building of partnerships and the initiation of peacebuilding into its mandates, in particular when these involve supervising and supporting the implementation of peace agreements.

Establishing or rebuilding the rule of law in a country affected by conflict is by definition a long-term undertaking. We have no illusions in that regard: there are no miracle solutions. However, the Security Council should consider new ways to set the foundations for lasting peace.

The President: I am now delighted to invite His Excellency Mr. Imron Cotan, Secretary-General of the Department of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, to take the floor.

Mr. Cotan (Indonesia): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, for convening this thematic debate. Let me assure you of our utmost support for your stewardship in ensuring a productive outcome to this debate. I should also like to extend to you the personal greetings of Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda. I very much enjoyed your conversation with him on Myanmar a few days ago.

As did the Minister of Defence of South Africa, my delegation would also like to associate itself with the statement to be made later by the representative of Jamaica, who will speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Since its introduction, in 1992, the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding has evolved and entered into the mainstream of various peace initiatives. It is now an integral part of the efforts by the international community to bring durable peace to countries emerging from conflict. In a world where wars, famine and destruction are acutely prevalent, post-conflict peacebuilding is a commendable effort that deserves our utmost support. Many countries that are on the agenda of the Security Council have benefited from such efforts. Post-conflict peacebuilding has been instrumental in ensuring that peace becomes sustainable in those countries.

Moreover, with the increasing significance of post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, there are currently high expectations to facilitate the expeditious graduation of current United Nations peacekeeping operations towards the post-conflict peacebuilding phase. That is an important phase not only for the country concerned but also for the Council, so that it can focus its work on more pressing issues, such as solving conflict and building peace in the Middle East, where violence long ago became a daily occurrence. It is indeed a tragedy that indiscriminate killings continue unabated in that part of the world.

While we underline the importance of post-conflict peacebuilding, we are nevertheless of the view that such an effort cannot be perpetual. It must have its exit and it must eventually strengthen the independence and self-reliance of countries where post-conflict peacebuilding missions are deployed. With regard to the role of countries that are recipients of post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, my delegation attaches primary importance to national leadership and ownership of endeavours. They must actively be involved in every step of the post-conflict peacebuilding process. Since post-conflict peacebuilding is a multifaceted process, we believe that it needs to be guided by a hierarchy of priorities established in response to the specific needs and political dynamics in the given recipient countries.

Post-conflict peacebuilding plays a critical role in guiding countries in the fragile post-conflict phase out of an environment of conflict and into a more stable state. While its significance cannot be questioned, much remains to be done in order to improve its effectiveness. Rapid deployment is as important with regard to post-conflict peacebuilding as it is in peacekeeping operations.

The United Nations has deployed various peacekeeping operations with large numbers of troops in different countries with some degree of success. As indicated by the Secretary-General in his remarks, that has to be supported by civilian experts, including development specialists, judges, administrators and other relevant professionals. As the United Nations is currently over-stretched in terms of personnel available for peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions, enhancing and broadening the scope of international cooperation becomes critical. However, the challenge to international collaboration is how to provide a sizeable, swift and coordinated response to the demands of post-conflict peacebuilding.

That brings me to the issue of funding, which is another critical element for successful post-conflict peacebuilding. All funding avenues must be explored and utilized. As helpful as they are, multi-donor trust funds cannot be the foundation for normal socio-economic activity, which requires self-sustaining avenues. The trap of debt and overly tight fiscal policies imposed by international institutions should also be avoided. Therefore, more efforts can and should be made to engage non-governmental resources and the private sector to fill the gaps.

We would like to underscore the central role of the Peacebuilding Commission with regard to post-conflict peacebuilding within the United Nations system. Now in its third year, the Peacebuilding Commission is beginning to find its niche and demonstrate its added value. It has been able to create linkages between political/security and financial/development actors and has maintained medium-term political attention on countries emerging from conflict.

Again, as has been eloquently explained by previous speakers, given the existence of so many competing institutions and resources, coordination is a major issue to be dealt with. We recognize the role that the Security Council can play in enhancing adequate coordination and division of labour at the level of United Nations organs. In our view, the Council can ensure the operational relevance of the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission, which remains essential for countries on the agenda of both bodies and for resolving the security-related aspects of peacebuilding.

Equally essential is the synergy between the Peacebuilding Commission, the General Assembly — including the Fifth Committee and the Special

Committee on Peacekeeping Operations — and the Economic and Social Council. It is particularly important to bridge the issues of peacebuilding, political stability, socio-economic recovery and humanitarian concerns, which could lay the foundations for longer-term development activities.

As stated by the Secretary-General in his remarks today, his Special Representatives play important roles in peace processes. They can play a coordinating role working with all relevant players in the overall efforts of the United Nations in a given country. They can also become focal points, both from a negotiation and mediation standpoint as well as from the administrative, financial and logistical ones.

Finally, my delegation would like to reaffirm our support for international efforts at post-conflict peacebuilding. We also reiterate our emphasis on the central role of the Peacebuilding Commission in providing the United Nations with policy guidance and strategies in its post-conflict peacebuilding activities.

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Mrs. Rama Yade, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights of France.

Mrs. Yade (France) (spoke in French): On behalf of France, I would of course like to join my colleagues in expressing to China and Myanmar our sadness at the humanitarian catastrophes they are currently experiencing.

Turning to our meeting today, I should like to warmly thank Mr. Miliband and the United Kingdom for presiding over the Council today and for having taken the initiative to organize this public debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. Post-conflict peacebuilding is today at the centre of the international community's concerns, and especially those of the Security Council.

During the crucial post-conflict stage, it behooves the international community to support still-precarious national institutions and enable them to meet the basic needs of the population. Of course the holding of elections is often a crucial and necessary stage for a country's return to peace, stability and democracy. Let us acknowledge, however, that that is not sufficient in itself. Unfortunately, we have before us some very worrying examples, whether in Timor-Leste or Haiti.

So what answers can we propose to meet those new challenges?

We must work to strengthen the international abilities of the United Nations to act during every stage of a crisis, from the threat of conflict through to reconstruction via peacekeeping and stabilization. That is a vision and a commitment that we share with the United Kingdom, as was reiterated by the President of the Republic and Prime Minister Gordon Brown during the Franco-British summit on 27 March. To that end we wish to act along four axes, without prejudice to the positions of the European Union (EU), which will soon be set out in the statement by Slovenia, with which France is in complete solidarity.

First, we have to strengthen the cohesiveness of the international community's interventions in post-conflict phases by integrating its various dimensions — political, security, humanitarian and development. In Afghanistan, for example, the entire international community is convinced of the need to implement a comprehensive civilian and military strategy. That is the thrust of resolution 1806 (2008), which has entrusted the Secretary-General's new Special Representative with a mission of coordinating the international community's effort, which includes these two aspects.

The Peacebuilding Commission is the first effort to improve the cohesiveness of the international community's actions. We believe that improvement of the Commission's working methods is desirable to enable it to meet that objective.

Secondly, we must also step up our actions in certain essential aspects of stabilization. Among the major issues — promoting the rule of law, setting up an effective and independent justice system and developing good governance — security sector reform is an indispensable, often crucial stage. United Nations endeavours in this field must be encouraged. The Security Council did so on 12 May (*see S/PV.5889 and S/PV.5890*). I wish to renew France's support for the Secretary-General's work in defining the Organization's approach to security sector reform.

I also wish to underscore the importance of combating impunity, which is the main condition for a genuine reconciliation, without which no lasting peace or development is possible. France was a sponsor of resolution 1593 (2005), which referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court. It was also a French expert who elaborated the main United Nations guidelines for the fight against impunity.

Therefore it is natural for us to support the national processes begun in Burundi, Mauritania and Togo in that sense. We will continue to resolutely support the action of international criminal justice — especially the International Criminal Court, whose rulings must be carried out.

The third axis — one which is close to my heart — is the promotion of and respect for human rights in societies emerging from crisis. There can be no long-term peace, no long-term security or no long-term development if civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights, are trampled underfoot. How can a State hope to engage in reconstruction without harnessing the energy, inventiveness and spirit of enterprise of its people, without guaranteeing freedom of expression and assembly, which would enable them to fully express their potential?

How can we hope to rebuild a stable and democratic society if the right to education, whether universal primary education or access to education for women, is not respected? How can one rebuild a society whose productive forces have been decimated by pandemics, or where women are marginalized?

That is why France cherishes the hope of seeing regulated and equitable globalization, and why we fight the scourge of child soldiers. It is why France has set up a forum to follow up the Paris Commitments to facilitate the financing of programmes for the social reinsertion of former child soldiers. We should have a long-term commitment in that regard. It is why it is also indispensable to strengthen the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, in all its aspects. We must do that both to combat sexual violence and the impunity that too many perpetrators of those unbearable acts still enjoy, and to guarantee the role of women in any peace or reconstruction process.

Finally, France intends to back United Nations action in the field of post-conflict stabilization by mobilizing the capacities of the European Union. Generally speaking, we support the development of the potential of regional organizations, including the African Union, in security questions. We especially wish to develop cooperation between the EU and the United Nations in those areas. The EU has a broad set of instruments and expertise that can be made available to the United Nations. That is true of missions of the

European Security and Defence Policy in the fields of security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Guinea-Bissau, the rule of law in Iraq or Georgia, or police in Afghanistan and Bosnia.

The development of partnership between the United Nations and the EU on security issues in the broad sense will thus be a priority of the French presidency of the EU, and we intend to work on that.

Mr. Tiendrébogo (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): We too wish to convey our deep condolences to China and Myanmar for the humanitarian catastrophes with which they are dealing.

I thank you, Mr. President, for the initiative of organizing this Council debate on peacebuilding and post-conflict stabilization, an issue that Burkina Faso pays particular attention to.

My delegation endorses the statement to be made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Countries emerging from conflict face numerous challenges, such as the destabilization of their economies, the collapse of security services and the defence forces, dysfunctional public administration and judicial systems, and more. All that places them in a very precarious situation. The current examples of Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and many other countries are illustrative in that regard.

Therefore it is urgent to help those countries emerge from that transitional period with an appropriate peacebuilding programme, which the Secretary-General, in his 1998 report entitled "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa", has already described as "actions undertaken at the end of a conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of armed confrontation" (*S/1998/318, para. 63*).

For my delegation, any consideration of post-conflict stabilization must recognize the essential role played by the Peacebuilding Commission. With regard to the Commission's activities, it seems to us that, while significant actions have been undertaken and partial results obtained — in particular in Burundi and Sierra Leone and soon, we hope, in Guinea-Bissau — the road still ahead of us is a long and difficult one. The Commission must redouble its efforts to mobilize partners and take adequate steps so that the priorities it has identified are matched to those of the

Peacebuilding Fund. That implies close cooperation between those two structures, which have complementary mandates, as well as a clear understanding on the part of each of its particular role.

As a financing organ, the Peacebuilding Fund is better equipped for designing or evaluating projects submitted to it. The Commission, more political in nature, should coordinate the efforts of all stakeholders, launch a constructive dialogue with all national actors, promote in all circumstances national ownership of the process, and make recommendations and suggest integrated peacebuilding strategies in accordance with the spirit and the letter of resolution 1645 (2005).

In addition to the contribution made by the Commission, we recognize that United Nations integrated missions, even if they have not wholly achieved the expected results, have made a significant contribution in the area of peacekeeping and peacebuilding in the immediate post-conflict period. Now, the issue of the deployment of multidisciplinary units of civilian experts should be accorded higher priority as well as the deployment of police advisers.

Given the need for significant resources during this crucial phase, international financial institutions also must play an important role, working together with the United Nations system.

These efforts should dovetail with those of subregional and regional institutions, which, given their proximity and their unique understanding of the socio-economic and cultural problems of the countries of their regions, are better able to mobilize efforts at the subregional level and to help strengthen bilateral relations between countries emerging from conflict and other States.

Thus, the Economic Community of West African States, for example, is playing an active role in the reconstruction of Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone. Similarly, numerous countries of the subregion are participating bilaterally in peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts in these countries. Therefore, the United Nations must work closely with the subregional institutions — in a spirit of partnership, of course.

With regard to the priority sectors in the context of post-conflict reconstruction and a return to lasting peace, my delegation believes that equal emphasis should be placed on strengthening the rule of law,

administrative reform, the thorny issue of debt and the relaunching of economic activity.

To conclude, we would like to underscore the fact that all of these processes must be carried out in the framework of a partnership with local authorities in order to promote national ownership. We also wish to underscore the need to involve all components of society, in particular women, in post-conflict reconstruction.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation, who, I am sure, will give us a good example of brevity.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The high level of representation at this meeting attests to the importance of the issue of peacebuilding in countries emerging from conflict as well as the importance of formulating practical recommendations on improving the United Nations system's activities on the ground and coordination between the system and other participants in peacebuilding processes.

We share the view that assistance by the United Nations and other partners in post-conflict reconstruction early in the revival of countries that have experienced through hot periods of crisis is fraught with many difficulties in terms of coordination and complementarity of efforts, financing and national capacity-building of beneficiary States. We believe that peacebuilding activities must be based on the principle of national responsibility for determining priorities and approaches to their implementation. Assistance by the United Nations or other international partners should be implemented with the agreement of national Governments and with respect for the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, as well as bearing in mind the specificities of the country in question.

The modalities for United Nations post-conflict assistance, whether in the form of peacekeeping operations, special political missions or joint United Nations peacebuilding presences, must be determined with the agreement of the host Government and must include a rational division of labour among regional organizations, international financial institutions and bilateral partners.

We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission has an important role to play in coordinating

peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict States. The Commission's work to date shows the difficulties that arise when putting into practice the concept of combining within one structure all interested players, including international financial institutions, regional organizations, the donor community, civil society and non-governmental organizations.

We believe that the Commission should not take on an executive role in the detailed determination of peacebuilding priorities in countries on its agenda, but rather should focus on coordination in those fields that require the stepped-up attention of the international community so as to contribute its activities to existing mechanisms for interaction, first and foremost, within the United Nations system.

A separate area of the Commission's work should be the mobilization of additional donor resources, inter alia, through a full-fledged integration into its work of international financial institutions, regional organizations, the private sector, the creation of medium- and long-term financial mechanisms and trust funds.

We attach great importance to the Peacebuilding Fund as a mechanism for emergency financing, which promotes the involvement of longer standing development assistance mechanisms. We are cognizant of the need to bolster civilian potential of both the host States and partners providing assistance in these fields, including the United Nations, in order to resolve the task of institutional capacity-building, security sector reform and socio-economic reconstruction.

We welcome the first steps of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions in strengthening the important assistance role played by the United Nations in this field, as well as the efforts of those regional organizations and Member States in strengthening their own peacebuilding, including civilian, capacities. These efforts must be targeted at training national experts and strengthening institutional capacities of host countries.

We cherish the hope that the issue of strengthening civilian expertise in the context of peacebuilding will be granted due attention by relevant United Nations system bodies involved in developing the Organization's potential in this field.

By way of conclusion, I would like to convey my gratitude to the delegation of the United Kingdom for

the preparation of the draft presidential statement and to state that we endorse it.

Mr. President, I hope that I lived up to your expectations.

The President: My dear colleague, Mr. Churkin, you certainly have.

Mr. Weisleder (Costa Rica) (spoke in Spanish): I would like to convey Costa Rica's condolences to the people of China and Myanmar for the catastrophes that they are living through.

I would like to thank the United Kingdom presidency for its initiative in organizing this session in order to examine challenges related to peacebuilding in the post-conflict period. In turn, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement made earlier today.

We have frequently said that we cannot have security without development, nor development without security. These are two inseparable elements in attaining peace and in peacebuilding. Experience has shown that achieving a sustainable peace — the end aim and the benchmark for the success of any peacekeeping operation — largely depends on the appropriate joining of these components.

For the people affected by armed conflict, the hope for a better future derives from the peace agreements that have been reached. It only becomes a reality, however, once basic economic and social needs have been met. Addressing these needs strengthens leaders who have turned away from violence and makes peace agreements sustainable.

Costa Rica believes that all United Nations actions in the area of peacekeeping should be undertaken in parallel in order to build peacebuilding. This idea is part of the recipe for success, and is, moreover, the best possible exit strategy. To that end, we agree with the proposal issued earlier by Prime Minister Gordon Brown that, when peacekeeping missions are authorized, the entire United Nations system should be able to authorize measures for stabilization and rebuilding.

For that reason, peacekeeping operations should be conceived from the very outset as integrated missions in which all of the United Nations institutional efforts dovetail effectively.

We should build on and develop to the maximum the potential of the young but ambitious architecture for peacebuilding with which we have equipped the United Nations. As a result, it would be wise, when creating or renewing peacekeeping missions, for the Council to request the Peacebuilding Commission to issue specific recommendations in order to insert an appropriate peacebuilding component in each and every one of these missions.

Moreover, we are aware that none of the possible recommendations issued by this Commission can lead to effective results, unless the necessary resources are made available to do so. As a result, this issue must be addressed expeditiously by the General Assembly. The General Assembly must take the necessary measures to ensure that the Peacebuilding Fund is available from the outset. We do not believe that there is any need to establish a new fund. To the contrary, we believe it would be best to make use of the tools available to us in the current structure, making the necessary adjustments.

A further tool that should be used to the full to make peace sustainable is the Peacebuilding Support Office. Costa Rica believes that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs need a mechanism for efficient interaction and coordination with the Peacebuilding Support Office in order to maximize synergies, share lessons learned and prevent gaps and overlap. An integrated, coherent and systemic approach to peacekeeping and peacebuilding will be developed only if we strike the right balance between authority and responsibility. Therefore, we must pay particular attention to the selection of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. These high-ranking officials are the repository of the authority of the United Nations, coordinating all the institutional efforts on the ground. Both the Secretary-General and the Security Council must provide proper follow-up for every mission, not only to remain informed, but also to take remedial action. There is nothing more volatile or difficult to manage than a post-conflict situation. Therefore, leaders must be able to draw on the necessary support and monitoring.

The civilian component of peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, which Costa Rica believes are two sides of the same coin in most cases, should be enhanced. We therefore deem it necessary to prioritize the creation and strengthening of rapidly deployable

civilian units within the member States. In this regard, we welcome the initiatives, such as that announced by Great Britain in April, on the establishment of a civilian standby force that would be able to respond rapidly to the call of the United Nations in order to contribute towards the stabilization and rebuilding of a country emerging from conflict. Costa Rica hopes that the report that we shall be requesting from the Secretary-General in the draft presidential statement we hope to adopt at the end of this debate will include an inventory of national capacities within Member States and will identify institutional possibilities to support the creation and strengthening of such capacities.

Finally, we would once again like to thank Great Britain for its leadership in this area, which has enabled us to reflect on the need to promote a systemic approach to ensure the best possible fulfilment of the mandates of each of the principle organs of the Organization. My country is of the view that the Council should expeditiously review the manner in which it considers the contributions made during these debates that are open to the broader membership. Costa Rica feels that the draft statement — and, in general, all statements issued by the Council as a result of open debates — would be enriched if we designed mechanisms enabling us to effectively take up the concerns expressed by Member States, on whose behalf we are acting.

Mr. Hoang Chi Trung (Viet Nam): First of all, let me join previous speakers in expressing Viet Nam's most profound sympathy and condolences to the peoples and the Governments of China and Myanmar over their recent sufferings and losses.

Mr. President, the Vietnamese delegation wishes to congratulate you and the United Kingdom on your effective leadership of the work of the Council this month. We also warmly welcome your initiative to hold this important open debate and highly appreciate your substantive and succinct concept paper to that end (S/2008/291, annex). The Vietnamese delegation associates itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

In an interdependent world, where the durable peace and sustainable development of a country and a region cannot be isolated from those of others, peacebuilding continues to emerge as an essential part

of the collective efforts of the United Nations and the international community to ensure the transition from conflict to peace, development and reconstruction, and to prevent the recurrence of conflicts. Past experiences in Angola, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Burundi and Timor-Leste remain vivid examples of how the long-term process of peacebuilding can help to address various political, security, socio-economic, humanitarian and development challenges in the post-conflict environment.

Experience in many other countries also reflects the fact that, even when agreements are signed and ceasefires are in place, countries may relapse into conflict or civil violence if post-conflict peacebuilding lags behind. The growing complexity of contemporary conflicts, which often have serious regional spillover and carry unpredictable socio-economic consequences, has led to tremendous constraints on post-conflict peacebuilding and has exposed its limitations in maximizing its efficiency, resources and impact on the ground. It also requires a multidimensional and multisectoral approach to peacebuilding in close correlation with other areas of equal importance, such as early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, pacific settlement of disputes, preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping operations.

At this juncture, my delegation believes that, in view of the specific characteristics of each post-conflict environment and with due respect for the fundamental principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the international community should establish a more comprehensive and effective peacebuilding strategy that addresses the period extending from immediately after the cessation of conflict to the conduct of an exit strategy and that responds to the specific needs of the country concerned in each particular phase of development. The focus of such a strategy should first be tailored to complement nationally owned efforts of building full ownership and capacity. On the implementation front, the strategy might range from the reinforcement of the judicial system and the early commencement of disarmament to the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants; from the promotion of institution-building and capacity-building to national reconciliation and rehabilitation; and from the enhancement of socio-economic reform to the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals.

Secondly, given its unique experience and advantages in human resources and institutional mechanisms, the United Nations should play the leading role in coordination and collaboration among local governments, specialized agencies, international financial institutions, troop contributors and the international donor community in order to ensure the optimal impact of international assistance in post-conflict situations, especially in addressing the root causes of conflicts, such as hunger, poverty, disease and the inequitable distribution of social welfare. It is equally important that coordination among the United Nations principal organs, as well as between United Nations Headquarters and field missions, be enhanced and better focused, thereby helping to maximize the use of available resources and capabilities and avoiding possible overlap and duplication. In this connection, my delegation reaffirms and supports the central role of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Commission as the appropriate dedicated institutional mechanisms to discuss the question of peacekeeping and peacebuilding in all its multiple dimensions.

Thirdly, it is also essential to enhance the effective cooperation and partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations in the areas of conflict prevention, management and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding and to strengthen the capacity of those organizations in these areas. While the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security falls within the purview of the Security Council, the mix of complementary resources and comparative advantages that regional and subregional organizations possess, including targeted expertise, local knowledge and geographical proximity, can be further exploited, in conformity with Chapter VIII of the Charter and, where appropriate, can contribute to helping countries recover from conflicts in all related fields.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the people of Panama, to express our solidarity with the peoples and the Governments of China and Myanmar in view of the tragedies that they both have suffered following the recent natural disasters.

This is a timely occasion to extend to you, Mr. President, my country's most sincere gratitude for convening this meeting and for your Government's

dedicated support for the consideration of the issue of post-conflict peacebuilding.

The subject that we are addressing today is how to attain lasting and sustainable peace in a country that has been affected by armed conflict, and which United Nations entities should participate in that process, the details of their involvement and, finally, their exit.

It is undeniable that the Security Council is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and, as such, is the key protagonist in the peaceful resolution of conflicts. In turn, it is universally acknowledged that, while the deployment of measures to promote and maintain peace is a prerequisite for ending conflict, it is not in itself sufficient to attain lasting peace and to prevent countries that lack the appropriate State machinery from quickly relapsing into violence.

In order to strengthen the peacebuilding process, at the 2005 World Summit, heads of State established the Peacebuilding Commission as an advisory body of the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and Security Council. However, the resolutions establishing the Commission — resolution 1645 (2005) and do not clearly stipulate when the Security Council should end its involvement — or when the Peacebuilding Commission should take up its duties. Panama is of the view that this should not be seen as an event, but rather as a process in which the Security Council commits itself to gradually reducing its participation and influence in the peacebuilding process as the Peacebuilding Commission takes up its responsibility for the process and takes the necessary medium- and long-term measures.

To that end, it is crucial that the Security Council, from the outset, establish clear, convincing and viable mandates for the future establishment of integrated missions, which would include, from early on, programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; security sector reform; conflict resolution and reconciliation techniques; the provision of technical assistance for democratic development; the promotion and protection of human rights; assistance for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse; and stabilization and recovery efforts to be carried out by the United Nations country teams.

Our aim should be to support communities emerging from conflict with coordinated, coherent and

integrated strategies and mechanisms throughout the process. Addressing the most visible symptoms also involves addressing the root causes of the conflict from the outset, immediately following the signing of a peace agreement and until the relevant communities have attained sustainable and socially responsible development.

I would like to state that Panama fully shares the view expressed earlier by the representative of Costa Rica that every United Nations peacekeeping effort should be undertaken in parallel with a peacebuilding effort. It almost goes without saying that those peace processes should be led by the country concerned, that they should include regional and subregional organizations and that they should be able to draw on the financial resources and capacities necessary for their success. In turn, leadership and communication on the ground are paramount in order to make those efforts work.

To that end, particular attention should be paid to the selection and strengthening of the coordination role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. Channels for communication should be ensured with the country's Resident Coordinator in order to ensure the effectiveness of those initiatives in the long term.

We would like to underscore that, for Panama, human beings with all their complexity, needs, fears and aspirations, should be placed at the heart of peacebuilding. That exercise is thus both integral and multidimensional in nature. It is the duty of the United Nations and of this Council to assist States in the responsibility to protect the human rights of post-conflict populations.

Finally, I would like to express Panama's support for the draft presidential statement that has been submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (spoke in Chinese): I would like to express my thanks to the United Kingdom for taking the initiative to organize this open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. This open debate provides a forum for the international community to undertake a focused discussion on ways and means to provide more effective assistance for post-conflict peacebuilding and to strengthen mutual cooperation in that regard. That is of great significance for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Peacebuilding is a common challenge facing humankind and a major issue that the United Nations and the international community need to address urgently. In today's world, where the fates of the peoples of all countries are closely interconnected, doing a good job in peacebuilding is not only helpful in ensuring lasting peace and sustained development in post-conflict countries, but also conducive to the enhancement of the current collective security system and to the common development of mankind. The international community should attach great importance to this issue and should examine it from a global strategic perspective.

How can we ensure that conflicts do not re-erupt? How can we enable populations to enjoy the dividends of peace? How can we transition from a fragile peace to a harmonious society governed by the people and for the people? What role can the countries concerned play in peacebuilding? How can the international community, and the United Nations in particular, provide effective and timely assistance? We do not have ready answers to those questions; nor do we have much experience to rely on. It is my hope that more ideas will come out of this meeting. I would like to make a few observations on behalf of China concerning the questions I have posed.

First, the country concerned bears the primary responsibility for peacebuilding. The ultimate purpose of peacebuilding is to build a modern State that is peaceful and stable, with economic development, respect for human rights and the rule of law. The local people are the foundation of peacebuilding efforts and the biggest beneficiaries of the results of peacebuilding. Without the active participation of the Government concerned and the enthusiastic support of the local population, a lasting peace is hard to imagine. Therefore, we should trust the local people and rely on the local Government and should encourage them to use their talents and ingenuity to lay down a sound reconstruction plan so that they can truly own and fully engage in the peacebuilding process.

Secondly, the international community has the important mission of assisting the countries concerned to realize peacebuilding. As a brand new task, peacebuilding requires that the countries concerned, the United Nations system, Member States, regional organizations and civil society make concerted efforts to address problems in a variety of areas, such as security, development, human rights and the rule of

law, in an integrated manner. In practice, what the countries concerned lack is often not political will, but the capacity necessary for peacebuilding. Here, the international community can use its advantage in areas such as finance and technology to provide constructive assistance to the countries concerned.

We have taken note of the relevant ideas in the concept paper prepared by the United Kingdom (S/2008/291, annex), including enhancing international coordination, ensuring flexibility in financing and establishing a civilian rapid deployment force. I wish to particularly stress that the envisaged corps of civilian experts should have expertise in a variety of areas, from security and rule of law to human rights and development, and that if conditions permit, it should help the countries concerned to build local expertise. We encourage Member States and the relevant organizations to assume the principal responsibility in that connection and we believe that the United Nations can play an active role in that regard.

Thirdly, the African continent should be accorded priority attention with respect to peacebuilding. As one of the most turbulent continents of our world and the region where optimism about achieving the Millennium Development Goals is at its lowest ebb, Africa faces such multiple challenges as frequent conflicts, economic backwardness, severe natural disasters, food crises and so on. We must recognize the fact that, without stability and development in Africa, there will be no world peace or prosperity. By helping Africa, we are helping ourselves. Currently, peace in many African countries is extremely fragile and urgently needs our special attention and careful nurturing.

The agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission is currently dominated by the situation in African countries, demonstrating the universal agreement of the international community concerning the special needs of Africa. In the future, the international community should continue to increase its contribution to the cause of peacebuilding in Africa.

As the organ entrusted with the sacred mission of maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council should play a crucial role in peacebuilding. We should work together with other United Nations organs — such as the Peacebuilding Commission, the General Assembly and the Economic

and Social Council — rely on the membership of the United Nations, enhance coordination with regional organizations, continuously promote the idea of peacebuilding, and continue to nurture the cause of peacebuilding.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): Through you, Sir, may I offer a very sincere welcome and express my strong appreciation to Mr. Miliband for his presence here. I must say that his presence here is intended to flag the fact that today is not business as usual. This is a very special debate, and we are grateful to the United Kingdom Government for the political vision that is behind it.

Listening to the statements that have been made so far, I would say that, at the end of the day, what is at stake here is how to make the Council, and through it the Organization and the other stakeholders in the private sector and civil society, more relevant on the ground so as to make a difference and offer a concrete horizon of hope to people who have suffered and are suffering, as recalled by you, Sir.

What we want to have today is, I think, a wake-up call, as was said so eloquently by Minister Bangura. We have also heard a very strong wake-up call from Mr. Brahimi — a distillate of operational and political wisdom, a backdrop that we have to keep in mind in our decisions. I would go further and say that, if we do not have the caveats that were so eloquently highlighted by Mr. Brahimi clear in our minds and in our behaviour on the ground, we will certainly be heading towards failure or, at best, ineffectiveness and irrelevance.

Italy fully associates itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union, so allow me to make just a few additional remarks.

In the crucial phase immediately after the cessation of a conflict and before the deployment of a peacekeeping mission, there is still no established intervention mechanism that can lay the foundations for reconstruction and assistance to national authorities. Italy is a firm supporter of developing greater rapid-deployment civilian capacities at the United Nations. We support a strong rule of law standing capacity, consisting of experts in areas crucial to the success of a stabilization action, especially juries, judges, administrators and political advisers.

However, with respect to that issue, we must of course keep clearly in mind what Mr. Brahimi has told us and the caveats that he has put forward, which I will not repeat. Such a capacity could be modelled on the standing police capacity, which would benefit from an increase in staff. We believe that the international community should collaborate on the formation of a nucleus of rapidly deployable civilian peacekeepers, who would partner with local authorities — who would be at the core of the effort — to draft a civil and economic reconstruction strategy in every area and lay the foundations for the work of the peacekeeping operation. Interested Member States could contribute by establishing inter-ministerial teams of peacebuilding specialists, including non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society.

At the same time, we need to strengthen the civilian component of peacekeeping missions and better integrate the military and civilian instruments. To that end, it is essential to adequately structure and update professional training, on which Italy has focused in the framework of the Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units and through its hosting of various United Nations and national institutes dedicated to the training of peacekeeping and peacebuilding professionals.

Italy supports the United Nations central role in peacebuilding. We thus hope that the development of the international community's intervention capacities will be accompanied by a more incisive United Nations role, particularly through the strengthening of the functions of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, as has been said by others. The goal is to foster greater coordination among the various United Nations system bodies and other stakeholders — such as donors, international financial institutions, regional organizations, the private sector and civil society — in such a way as to address post-conflict needs, starting on day one after the cessation of hostilities. A good start would be to launch, for example, a database and to create a network between organizations that are already active in the area.

Allow me to make a final consideration. Populations tormented by conflicts need concrete and immediate dividends on the ground that can provide relief for suffering and foster the gradual return of a secure, socially organized life governed by the rule of law and sustained by economic prospects. In most cases, at least one year goes by between the end of

hostilities and the beginning of appropriation from the trust fund created for the reconstruction of a country, apart from the most urgent humanitarian interventions. That is too much time, considering the urgency of the needs and the broad array of actions needed. More rapid and flexible financing mechanisms are required to address that crucial initial phase. I will not repeat what has been said by Mr. Brahimi, the Deputy Minister of Belgium and others on that issue.

The obvious choice would be to strengthen and give greater centrality to an existing instrument — the Peacebuilding Fund — rather than to create new mechanisms that risk making intervention even more complex. Here, I fully endorse what was said in particular by the Minister of Defence of South Africa, as well as by my colleague from Costa Rica. In the months to come, we will have to review the Peacebuilding Fund's terms of reference in the light of past experience. It is our hope that the review will be conducive to making the Fund more effective and more consonant with the need for immediate intervention implicit in the original conception, and above all to strengthening the catalysing function of intervention financed by other donors, so that resources are not distributed haphazardly and indiscriminately.

Mr. Ettalhi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, on behalf of my country, I should like to convey my deepest condolences to the peoples of China and Myanmar on the huge human losses they have suffered.

I should also like to thank the United Kingdom for organizing this debate on an issue of great importance. We highly appreciate the presence of Mr. Miliband, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

First, I wish to emphasize that my delegation aligns itself with the statement to be made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. I should like to make a few additional remarks.

As was declared at the 2005 World Summit, development, peace, security and human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing areas. That basic principle should be taken into consideration in any discussion about post-conflict peacebuilding. In that context and because of the limitations of our

experience, I should like to make a few brief comments.

First, in post-conflict peacebuilding, it is essential that peacekeeping forces should not be withdrawn before ensuring that the conditions in the country concerned have become appropriate, because a premature withdrawal could plunge the country back into conflict and violence — a situation that is particularly difficult to address. Peacebuilding requires that we take a comprehensive approach in restoring a secure environment, placing priority on building State institutions, rebuilding police and military forces, establishing the rule of law and promoting human rights, with a particular emphasis on eradicating poverty, hunger and marginalization. At a later stage, it requires that we lay the foundations for sustainable development and build the Government's capacity to provide essential public services, including health care and education, and to create employment opportunities. All of that should be carried out with full respect for the sovereignty of the country concerned and for its ownership of all processes under its leadership.

Secondly, viability and sustainability of the peacebuilding process requires the commitment and participation of all local actors and responsible implementation. As already noted, the process should be comprehensive and based on mutual commitments, pledges and contacts between all national actors concerned.

Thirdly, we wish to highlight the important role that can be played by regional and subregional organizations and States, in addition to the international community, by providing the necessary support for the efforts of the country concerned in order to increase its confidence and ensure that it does not slide back into violence, so that it can make the transition to economic stability and prosperity.

We also wish to emphasize the pivotal role that can be played by neighbouring States in achieving national reconciliation and accord — particularly in Africa, because of transborder cultural and tribal relationships. Here, too, it is essential to provide international support for the Government concerned, in the form of the funds and expertise needed to facilitate its implementation of post-conflict projects and strategies in accordance with its priorities. We do not deny the importance of providing such support at the bilateral level, but we believe that it is more effective if

it is provided to the Peacebuilding Fund and to experts who work under United Nations auspices.

Fourthly, we believe that it is imperative to establish mechanisms for full coordination and expertise-sharing between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Economic and Social Council so as to guarantee the effective performance of those United Nations organs in the area of post-conflict peacebuilding, and so that they can mobilize donors, ensure that pledges are honoured and move beyond addressing immediate problems to comprehensive reconstruction and sustained assistance, which should be provided to all development projects in the countries concerned.

Fifthly, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund are the peacebuilding structures of the United Nations. Since its establishment, the Commission has sought to take a comprehensive approach to post-conflict peacebuilding that takes into account the links between security, development, human rights and the rule of law. Maintaining that approach will ensure that countries do not relapse into conflict and violence.

Finally, as emphasized by many preceding speakers, the international community must provide the necessary funding to the Peacebuilding Commission by donating to the Peacebuilding Fund, so that post-conflict countries can carry out their strategies and help the United Nations consolidate the peace. That includes implementing projects in priority areas, mainly disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, security sector reform, reconciliation efforts and reconstruction, which are essential for sustainable development.

We thank the United Kingdom for providing the final version of the draft presidential statement that was circulated this morning and which we support.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): First of all, I would like to express our solidarity, sympathy and support to the people of China and Burma on their losses and suffering as a result of recent natural disasters. Secondly, I would like to thank you, Mr. Foreign Secretary, for your leadership in organizing this Security Council debate on the important topic of post-conflict peacebuilding.

A good metaphor for the immediate post-conflict period is the so-called golden hour — the period

immediately after a person suffers a severe trauma and during which, if he or she receives treatment, the chances of recovery are much greater than if help comes later. If we can find better ways to improve people's lives in the golden hour after a conflict ends or as territory begins to be stabilized in a conflict, we can dramatically improve the efficiency and success of later stabilization and reconstruction efforts.

We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission, which is less than 2 years old, could ultimately play an important role in United Nations peacebuilding, by helping to marshal the necessary resources during this golden hour and subsequently ensuring that peacebuilding is sustainable. As the representative of France stated, the working methods of the Peacebuilding Commission need to be strengthened to make it as effective as possible.

I would like to say a few words about the three key gaps identified in the United Kingdom's concept note as hampering international efforts for stabilization and building sustainable peace.

The first is the need for strong leadership on the ground. It has frequently been noted that successful implementation of Council mandates must involve a huge number of United Nations, regional and other international-community actors. Leadership on the ground requires excellent coordination. The role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who must have a clear mandate with the necessary authorities and resources, is critical.

We support ongoing work to ensure proper integration of United Nations missions. The Special Representative will need training and support in promoting an integrated and coordinated approach to promoting stability that draws upon all the resources of the United Nations system. The United Nations leadership should take advantage of the Peacebuilding Commission's ability to convene all stakeholders and promote an integrated strategic vision in tackling threats to stability.

The second gap is an inability to rapidly deploy sufficient civilian capacity. We agree that skilled civilians, such as police officers, judges, relief workers, administrators and other civilian experts, are as important as troops during the golden hour. We therefore urge Member States to build up capacity for deployment of civilians with the relevant areas of expertise necessary for sustainable peacebuilding. We

have been working on this effort in the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization through ongoing work to prepare for post-conflict work more than 4,000 deployable civilians, who would be available to join international efforts as appropriate. Just as critically, we need to devise ways rapidly to train local personnel and build host-nation State institutions to carry out those functions as soon as possible.

Third is the need for rapid and flexible funding. Simply attracting adequate financial resources is often an enormous challenge for the international community in this field. We must recognize that to intervene without sufficient resources is to court failure. We stand ready to explore various ways of streamlining and improving these mechanisms, including the Peacebuilding Fund. Also, we must fully utilize the surge of resources during an international civilian/military operation to ensure that reconstruction, stabilization and development can later be sustained with more modest levels of donor assistance.

In addition to the three key gaps identified in the concept paper, I would like to highlight several additional issues that need to be taken into account in order to produce success.

As the international community engages in a post-conflict situation, a compact should exist between local leaders and the international community, but for those compacts to be productive, they should consist of a clear articulation of goals, priorities and benchmarks for both sides, and a review process. The international community must do better in building institutions for security and the rule of law, particularly police forces that can be trusted by all local communities and factions, and in carrying out the decommissioning, demobilization and reintegration programmes with a more robust process for reintegrating former combatants.

Peacebuilding strategies should build capacity in other local institutions, and priority should be placed on creating the ability of local leaders to manage public finance. Additional focus should be given to energizing the private sector, especially removing obstacles to the creation of local businesses that can produce goods and services to meet local needs — that is, to jump-start the private economy, not just engage in reconstruction contracting.

We must take into account the regional dimensions of conflicts, which often require engagement to preclude local parties from receiving support from neighbouring countries or creating sanctuaries in their territories, and to leverage an environment conducive to the success of the stabilization effort.

Peacebuilding requires the international community to engage as long as needed but to act in ways that encourage increasing shifts to self-reliance by building and using local capacity, and, as Mr. Brahimi said, by getting itself out of a job as soon as possible.

The international community can do better in addressing peacebuilding challenges. We must resolve to develop the kind of peacebuilding capacities that are required to fulfil our mandate to advance international peace and security and to improve the prospects for success in post-conflict situations.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

Can I first of all thank all the speakers so far who have engaged in such a disciplined way, and also a constructive and honest way, with the difficult issues that we are confronting. I will abbreviate the speech that is being circulated, in the interests of time.

I think it is worth remembering that the founding objective of the United Nations was to secure peace after the ravages of Second World War. On one indicator, since the end of the cold war there has been a welcome decline in the number of armed conflicts, a decline of about 40 per cent. But there is another statistic, which I do not think has been cited today, that is nonetheless significant and speaks directly to the point that Ambassador Khalilzad has just made. He referred to a golden hour. The statistic that I have is that 30 per cent of conflicts break out again within five years of a peace settlement. I think that speaks to the challenge that he laid out for us.

It is obviously a challenge for the parties to a peace settlement, but it is also a challenge to the international community for the way it delivers support. I would like to highlight what the Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone said about local ownership and local responsibility. Her story, I think, is obviously one in which the international community has played a role by helping to end the fighting. But the real success

is the work that has been led by the Government and people of Sierra Leone. That is the lesson we need to take forward as we address the three questions that were posed in the concept paper that we circulated (S/2005/291).

I would like to reflect briefly on the difference between success and failure in the number of examples that have been given today in each of the three areas.

The first concerns effective leadership. A fragmented international response is unable to be the right sort of responsible partner for any country trying to seek stability after conflict. That is a major issue in the case of Afghanistan, where the recent appointment of Mr. Kai Eide is very important for that country. But the United Kingdom also believes it is important to bring together the civil and military functions that too often have been separate. It is not just a matter of coordinating institutions; it is also a matter of integrating functions, and that is what we will be doing through our combined civil/military mission in Helmand province.

The second priority that we highlighted in our paper concerned civilian expertise, and some very good points have been made about that today. At the moment, over 130 British civilian experts are working in international missions, but our Prime Minister has committed us to developing a pool of about 1,000 such experts, from customs officials to judges and police officers, able to work on a standby basis and therefore to deploy at speed in areas where needed. I am very conscious of what the South African Defence Minister said about the need for the international community to be able to respond in real time, not in bureaucratic time. I think the development of a standby capacity is important in that respect.

The third challenge in the paper concerns funding. Here I do want to highlight the option of a United Nations recovery fund, to which donors commit funds in advance so that resources are there to kick-start recovery efforts, rather than having to spend time raising the money once the crisis has emerged. We have national arrangements for funding stabilization and recovery, but at the moment there is not a central international source of funding, and I think we could benefit from having one.

I want to conclude by returning to the theme that we started our discussion with today. We began with a minute's silence for the victims in China and Myanmar.

The issues of leadership, expertise and funding that we highlight in our paper on post-conflict stabilization are also important in responding to humanitarian disasters. In the United Kingdom we have taken enormous heart from the fact that in the midst of terrible tragedy in China we have seen Japanese rescue teams working alongside Chinese colleagues to help save lives. I believe is an important example.

Sadly, we have not yet the same level of international cooperation with the Burmese authorities. Our interest in the situation in Burma is humanitarian. From a briefing this morning, I understand that the people of Burma desperately need boats, helicopters and logistics experts, as well as medical supplies and food, to ensure the massive step-up in the delivery effort that is needed. The challenge is to put in place an emergency response of the scale that we saw for the Asian tsunami and the Pakistan earthquake. I am sure we all hope that the Secretary-General will be able to bring about that level of effort through his good offices and his meetings in Rangoon this week.

Let me end where I began by saying that resolving conflict is at the heart of the Security Council's agenda. One of the lessons of the past 20 years is that there is a need for civilian expertise to be deployed rapidly to support Governments. We need their people, their funding and their leadership. Like many others who have spoken today, we too look to the Secretary-General to offer, on the basis of this discussion, advice that helps to develop an international capacity sufficient to the task.

That concludes my national statement, which I hope respected the time limit that I set for others. I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

It is my great honour to welcome Mr. Nikola Špirić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to invite him to take the floor.

Mr. Špirić (Bosnia and Herzegovina) (*spoke in Bosnian; English text provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I would like to express my condolences to the peoples of China and Myanmar on the occasion of the tragic catastrophes that took place in those countries.

I would like to thank you very much, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on such an important subject as post-conflict peacebuilding. Please let me express my appreciation for the

opportunity to address the Security Council during this important debate in order to share with it the experiences of my country since 1995 and to share my views regarding the international community's involvement in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I come from a country where a tragic conflict took place between 1992 and 1995 ending with the Dayton Peace Accord, which was negotiated under the auspices of the international community. I use the term "tragic conflict" deliberately, given the fact that the term was used by the authors of the Dayton Peace Accord. Such a definition, avoiding words such as aggression and civil war, makes it possible to take a more courageous step out of an inglorious and unfortunate past that cannot be changed. Such a step will, hopefully, lead us into a future that includes coexistence, tolerance, reconciliation and forgiveness as guarantees for the ultimate success of my country.

The Dayton Peace Accord ensured the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its constitutional framework, under which the country consists of two entities — the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina — with a clear constitutional basis. A formula was therefore established that would mean success for all. A strong State means strong entities and strong entities mean a strong State; or, to use terms from the world of sport, strong football clubs make for a strong national team. Unfortunately, some would like to change that formula without offering a better one in its place, a problem that confirms the very vision of the authors of Dayton Peace Accord.

With various degrees of success and with the assistance of the international community, since 1995 Bosnia and Herzegovina has overcome many obstacles, faced many challenges and carried out many reforms. I would like to mention a few.

Defence reform has been successfully completed, which is considered to be the best reform project in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That reform has led Bosnia and Herzegovina to join the Partnership for Peace, thereby enabling my country to cease being a mere consumer of NATO peace operations and become an ally in the peace operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the Bucharest NATO summit, NATO member States decided to initiate an intensive dialogue with Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are also committed to working towards full membership of NATO.

We have established a unified intelligence sector by successfully emerging two previously opposed intelligence agencies into a State-level body with all the responsibilities of any modern intelligence service anywhere in the world.

The process of reforming the taxation system was significantly advanced through the introduction of a value-added tax that ensures a steady inflow of revenue and reduces tax evasion and the grey economy.

We have implemented justice system reform and begun trials for war crimes suspects within the justice system of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are now working on education reform and have thus far adopted all the necessary legislation.

We are actively working on public administration reform, and even reform of the sports sector is under way.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has made significant progress in the economic realm. Although we may agree that it is not yet satisfactory, there is no question that the economy is on the right track. In 2007, the real growth rate in the gross domestic product was 6.1 per cent. The projected growth rate for 2008 is 6.5 per cent. Further growth is expected in 2009 and 2010. Foreign direct investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina reached record highs during 2007.

The reforms and economic progress to which I have just referred have been accompanied by accomplishments with regard to relations with neighbouring countries and foreign policy as a whole. Bosnia and Herzegovina has become a member of the Council of Europe and the Partnership for Peace. Sarajevo has been chosen as the headquarters of the Regional Cooperation Council centre for South-Eastern Europe. Bosnia and Herzegovina has also become a member of the Human Rights Council. And, in December 2007, we initialled the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union. After fulfilling the final political requirement for the signing of the Agreement, we expect that Brussels will inform us of the date for the signing ceremony.

It is important to mention that Bosnia and Herzegovina is currently participating in six United Nations peacekeeping missions around the world: three military missions — in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Iraq — and

three police missions — in Liberia, Cyprus and the Sudan.

Everything that I have mentioned serves to prove that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made progress in the recent past. I am fully aware that more could have been done, although we still face many unresolved issues and difficult challenges. I would like to remind the Council that, just 13 years ago, Bosnia and Herzegovina was in the midst of a bloody war. Since then we have been the only country in Europe to experience three extremely difficult and demanding processes, namely, the reconstruction of a war-ravaged country, the re-establishment of trust between three former warring factions and the process of transition and Euro-Atlantic integration. Those processes have been very difficult but, with the help of the international community, we have successfully concluded that phase of the Dayton Accord.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation for the international community's involvement in the post-conflict recovery of my country. Many great things have been done, from its active role in stopping the war — the most important thing — to its active participation in, and support for, the reforms. From the very end of the war, the international community has implemented a special model of indirect rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the High Representative and his Office and the strong powers conferred by the Bonn Conference, which has now resulted in various disputes.

Those powers included the ability of the High Representative to remove elected officials and to impose laws and decisions. I do not want to argue that that was not necessary immediately following the war in order for progress to take place, but today we must reconsider those powers, for many have found them to be very much in conflict with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I believe that those powers also contradict the Brussels road map for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, the Council would agree that the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2008 is significantly different from the circumstances in 1995 or 1996. It is therefore almost certain that, more than 10 years after Dayton, the model for administering Bosnia and Herzegovina through the High Representative and his Office has been exhausted and that it is now time to look for a new formula for success in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

One should bear in mind that the international community, which undoubtedly had the best of intentions, created major dependences among local politicians. I have repeatedly said that domestic politicians feel that they do not have to deal with or discuss difficult issues or seek compromise, because they know that the representatives of the international community will do it for them. That is not the right way to do things.

Given everything I have mentioned, I am convinced that Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to take a new step forward and move into a new stage. I would call it a sobering-up phase. Now is the time to realize that we must step out of the wheelchair and take responsibility for crucial processes, not just formally but substantively. It is time for our friends to advise and support us, but not to speak and work in our place. I know that the beginning will be painful, but I am sure that that is the only way for us to realize that all of us living in Bosnia and Herzegovina must turn to each other. That is the only way to establish the necessary dialogue among elected officials. I also think that Bosnia and Herzegovina, like any other post-conflict country, needs to build trust within, along with dialogue and reforms. I daresay that the building of trust is more important than any reform. When dialogue, respect and fruitful discussion prevail, we can say that we are making good progress. It is in striving to reach that goal that we, the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, need each other the most. I would like once again to emphasize that only citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and not the Office of the High Representative nor the international community, can create a future based on compromise.

In my opinion, the following lesson has been learned in Bosnia and Herzegovina: the international community's engagement in post-conflict countries is not just needed but necessary, but it must be precisely defined and limited and have a clear exit strategy. Otherwise, sooner or later, that engagement will become counterproductive.

At the same time, one should bear in mind that every crisis in the world has its own specificities and should therefore be approached analytically, taking into account the roots of the crisis and the culture, history, civilization, religion and customs of the people living there. A successful methodology that has been used in one place cannot become a mere blueprint for the next, because there is no guarantee that it will be useful in

other places. Each individual crisis should be approached without prejudging it and should be carefully analysed with respect to how and where particular lessons learned could be applied and where new, original models have to be developed.

The President: We now have time, assuming they stick to the five minute limit, for two final European speakers. First of all, I give the floor to my good friend, Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain.

Mr. Moratinos (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): First and foremost, allow me to join with all those who have conveyed their solidarity and condolences to the peoples and authorities of China and Myanmar for the natural disasters that they have recently been affected by. And above all, allow me to express my pleasure at participating in this debate on strategies for post-conflict stabilization on the eve of the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the launching of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Spain is firmly committed to global peacebuilding and to the enhancement of civilian aspects of crisis management. It is for that reason that Spain also chose this issue for the thematic debate organized by Spain in this Council during the Spanish presidency in 2004.

Peacebuilding is the most important challenge that the international community faces, and we must spare neither commitment nor efforts in order to achieve it. As the sixteenth century Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives wrote, the first condition for peace is to have the will to achieve it. That is why a peace process must lead to a rapid implementation of its terms so that the population may immediately benefit from its dividends. For this reason, we must pay preferential attention to rapid upfront support mechanisms that alleviate the suffering of local people and that meet their most urgent needs. The driving force behind these actions must be reflected in mission mandates as well as in public communication strategies that favour mutual understanding with the affected populations within which they operate.

Post-conflict management must also tackle the deep roots of confrontation in order for peace to be durable. This requires prolonged efforts on the part of the international community, even though the primary responsibility lies, as has been said here earlier, with the authorities of the country recovering from conflict.

To this end, peace and coexistence require the firm commitment of Governments, and harmony and inclusion are the bases upon which a social State and the rule of law must be established.

The concept of the peace mission is a living, evolving concept. Peace missions are increasingly complex, and some of the latest operations authorized by the Security Council have shown that they no longer correspond to the limited notion that inspired the operations of 60 years ago. Terms such as "hybrid operation", "multidimensional", "peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding", are applied ever more frequently, although the international community is still not able to respond adequately to the challenges posed by these complex situations.

One of the areas in which the international community has been unable to keep pace with reality is the incorporation of civilians, as was mentioned by the representative of the United States. Civilians play an essential role in missions, given the nature of the majority of violent conflicts, as well as the challenges and particular aspects involved in reconstruction. We must not only include a greater number of civilian experts in missions, but we must also legitimize their functions and provide these experts with the means to carry out their tasks, in accordance with the relevant mission mandate. All in all, we should move towards the establishment of a body of experienced and specialized civilian experts, providing them with promotion and career opportunities within this Organization, in order to be able to fulfil a variety of tasks such as contributing to the strengthening of institutions of a post-conflict society and advising central and local authorities on the establishment of the rule of law, on the true separation of powers and on security sector reform. These challenges demand greater efforts by donor States and must be realistically reflected in peace mission mandates. In this regard, Spain is committed to updating and improving its contributions in police matters.

For these reasons, it would be advisable to have stable civilian teams, along the lines of the Secretariat's recently established Standing Police Capacity. It is essential that we launch a unit to identify experts, train them and ensure their effective availability so that they can join the mission from the first moment. This perspective applies, in particular, to experts in the field of the administration of justice.

The success of these tasks hinges on civilian capacities and on the availability of greater economic resources — hence the importance of linking more closely with national organizations for cooperation and development. Therefore, the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and its Fund point in the right direction.

With this goal in mind, Spain will soon adopt a cooperation strategy for peacebuilding, which will consolidate our action in peace processes and present lessons learned from the Spanish experience in places such as Central America, the Balkans and Southern Africa where our country has participated. In spite of the achievements that have been made, a great deal remains to be done.

It would be desirable, as has been said frequently this morning, for there to be a new focus in the formulation, mandating, implementation and follow-up of peace missions, as well as in all efforts geared towards post-conflict reconstruction, bearing in mind that, ultimately, ownership of any post-conflict reconstruction process belongs to the country that has suffered the conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Mr. Maxime Verhagen.

Mr. Verhagen (Netherlands): Mr. President, I join you and others in expressing my sincere condolences to the people of China and Burma/Myanmar.

Securing sustainable peace is even harder than ending armed conflict. Today, as the international community is engaged in efforts to end armed conflicts in many places, we must prepare to undertake the difficult task that is securing sustainable peace. That is extremely urgent and this debate is extremely timely. I therefore commend the United Kingdom for its initiative in organizing it.

Peace is more than the absence of armed conflict. Peace encompasses freedom from want and fear, and freedom of religion and expression. Peace is the ability to live a decent life, raise a family and not have reason to fear that authorities or others might hurt one or one's family.

Peace is about living in a country with people of different beliefs, races and convictions, where human rights are respected and where one is governed by

legitimate leaders who know that their legitimacy rests on the quality and fairness of their decisions. Peace requires the rule of law domestically, and if it fails domestically, then it must come through international institutions such as the International Criminal Court and the special tribunals set up by this Council.

Finally, peace is also about being protected by one's Government against harm, and about being helped by the Government if one is harmed, by arms, by man-made disasters or by natural disasters such as the cyclone that hit Burma two weeks ago or the earthquake that hit China last week. And while all this may seem simple and fundamental, this kind of peace is elusive for millions. That is what today's debate is about: what can we do better to help people — real people — to reach real peace.

As is pointed out in the excellent note prepared by the President, the primary responsibility for building peace and stimulating sustainable development after conflict lies with national authorities. The principle of the responsibility to protect, embraced by all of us at the 2005 summit, stresses that each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations. That responsibility is broad.

The principle of the responsibility to protect is not, in my view, aimed at eroding or undermining the principle of national sovereignty. It aims to promote responsible conduct by governments, or — as was suggested yesterday by the President — responsible sovereignty. So, in my view, it also includes protection against non-man-made threats, such as the effects of natural disasters. Why? Because gross negligence and woefully inadequate responses to such threats may actually lead to even greater humanitarian suffering. Suffering may be caused to such an extent that the inadequate response must be considered a crime against humanity, thus forming a ground for action by this Council.

It follows that when a government cannot or does not effectively live up to its responsibility, the international community must act. The Security Council is the central forum for debate and discussions in such cases, while member States can join assistance efforts. Against this background, I warmly support the leadership role taken up by the Secretary-General and some countries, notably those of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, to come to the rescue of the suffering Burmese people. The Government and people

of the Netherlands are committed to supporting these efforts.

I return to peacebuilding after armed conflict. As has been pointed out by others, crucial elements in meeting the challenge of building peace after conflict are timing, coordination and assuring that the capacity for assistance is ready to be deployed right when needed. Those factors are crucial for timely action.

Next to the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission has a central role to play in mobilizing support, if possible even before fighting has ended. We expect the Commission to ensure that countries that are donor orphans are not left behind.

We see a pivotal role for United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to lead in the recovery phase, enabling the Government to provide basic services and helping to restore the social fabric. It urgently needs to develop greater surge capacity, working with United Nations agencies and others like NATO and the European Union. Hence the necessity for coordination and hence our support for strengthened roles of the representatives of the United Nations. Afghanistan is a case in point, and my Government will be very pleased when the United Nations is able to spread its presence throughout the country.

Allow me to underscore the urgent need for coordination both by and within the United Nations. The roles of the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, UNDP and others must be channelled through a single United Nations office in the country concerned.

Regarding capacity, I agree that the challenge is to create effective ways for making expert capacity permanently available, through pooling, for example. We all face the same difficulty as others do: there are too few experts are available when we need them.

The need for flexible funding is evident. In the Netherlands, we have created a stability fund with this aim. It can be used for both official development assistance (ODA) and non-ODA. We suggest that others set up similar funds.

When peace is in sight, there is no time to lose. Peacebuilding requires the provision of basic services, effective and inclusive dialogue and providing people with secure and safe livelihoods. We call for strong United Nations leadership and pledge our support for efforts in this respect.

The President: I think that is a very good note on which to conclude the morning session. I am extremely grateful to all those who have contributed so far, many of whom have come from a very long distance. There are 30 speakers this afternoon to take the debate forward.

I am reminded of the quotation from our Spanish colleague: If the first condition of peace is the will to achieve it, then I think that this morning's debate has helped to show genuine will, and I look forward to it being taken forward.

The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m.